



# Montgomery County Council

*From the Office of Councilmember Phil Andrews*

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**For Immediate Release**

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**May 11, 2004**

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**Statement by County Councilmember Phil Andrews, sponsor of the resolution to cut the property tax rate, on Council President Steve Silverman's proposal to expand the Homeowners Property Tax Credit Program.**

I welcome Councilmember Silverman's proposal, but, this proposal could only help a small number of County homeowners (approximately two to four percent). This means that his proposal would do nothing for more than 95% of county homeowners, and it is not a substitute for reducing the property tax rate.

Unless the County Council reduces the property tax rate, a county homeowner with a home assessed at \$300,000 will see their tax bill rise by almost \$2,000 in the next five years, from \$3,219 to \$5,184 due to skyrocketing assessments. Those homes assessed at values more than \$300,000 will only be more negatively impacted.

This is unacceptable and is why I introduced the resolution (on April 20) to cut the property tax rate by 2% in FY 05. To protect essential services in this challenging budget year, the \$21.6 million of tax relief would be offset by raising the energy tax. Homeowners will save money because the residential sector pays only 30% of the energy tax but 70% of the property tax.

Families need a break on skyrocketing property tax bills that far exceed inflation. It is not right for the Council to expect homeowners to shoulder 10% hikes (the maximum annual increase) in their property tax bills year after year.

I will work closely with Mr. Silverman to provide property tax relief to all county homeowners this year.

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